Like all Jamesian heroes, Densher too is intelligent, percipient and self-critical. The novel dramatises the choice which Densher is called upon to make between two types of love, namely, the possessive greedy love, and the altruistic and sacrificing love, in the final choice he makes lies the measure of his refinement. The conflict in his mind is between passionate romantic loyalty on one side, and a deep sense of obligation and gratitude on the other, and out of this conflict evolves his character. The stages of his moral growth are very carefully drawn. The weak-willed Densher is, at first, wax in the hands of Kate whom he loves passionately. "Handled" by Kate, Densher agrees to "do as she liked - his own liking might come off as it would."[1]* He is easily persuaded into executing the diabolical plan of Kate, who declares that she can do things which she does not like. From a sense of loyalty to the woman whom he loves, Densher resolves not "to give away the woman one loved, but to back her up in her mistakes - once they had gone a certain length - that was perhaps chief among the inevitabilities of the abjection of love,"[30] He is completely dominated by Kate. He says, "I'm doing nothing - and shall not, 1 assure you, do anything but what I'm told."''[1] The abjection of love blinds him to the moral considerations of the diabolical role which he is called upon to play by Kate. He tells her, "1 do nothing for anyone in the world, but you. But for you I'll do anything."[32] The cunning Kate fully exploits the weak-willed Densher's abject subordination to her. Convinced that Milly, who loves Densher deeply, would die and leave him her fortune, Kate tutors Densher, "Please her; make her see how clever you are - only without letting her know that you'are trying. If you're charming to her you've nothing else to do."*[s] Densher is shocked by her unscrupulous disingenuousness and asks her if she wants him to be a "brute of a humbug to her," (Milly).

In agreeing to be a humbug to Milly, Densher agrees to be a humbug to himself. He is called upon to be what he is truly not by nature. He has great "horror of moral ugliness," and is not

happy
about the role assigned to him. He perceives that Mrs. Lewder's
drawing-room is "operatively, ominously... cruel" and that ugly objects
were "a portentous negation of his own world of thought/'** Although
very loyal to Kate, he feels at! the time that he is not doing trie
right thing by the "little American girl who had been kind to him in
New York and to whom certainly... he was perfectly willing to be
kind/'** He feels the "oddity... of his having sunk deep. It was
bfet:§juse if fy$s alt doing what Kate ha$ conceived far